

Recap: 2009 Speech from the Throne – August 2009

Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)

The government will invest \$1.6 billion they have received from Government of Canada for the HST to “*help protect vital health and education services*”. With regard to HST impacts, the government has made a commitment to “*help mitigate negative impacts*”.

Efficiency Review

“Intrinsic to our budget crunch is the chance to discover new ways of doing things and to find new savings by doing things differently in all ministries and Crown agencies...Crown agencies will work to find new ways of doing things so we can deliver quality services at lower costs...Taxpayers have a right to expect that the dollars they are investing for services are optimally managed by all entities reliant on provincial funding and that cost containment is central to their efforts in the months and years ahead.”

Wages & Benefits

The government highlighted the need “*to constrain wage-related spending pressures*”. “*Rising public sector wage and benefit costs only put more pressure on government to find savings through layoffs and other workforce reductions.*”

Health Authorities

“Adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles should not prevent government from maximizing its public investments in independent, regulated authorities. Pending the outcome of the Comptroller General's review, legislation may be needed to protect and advance those public interests.

Health Authorities, Boards of Education and Crown corporations will all be subject to similar reviews in the year ahead. Where service-delivery mechanisms can be improved at a lower administrative cost, they should be. Where Crown agencies or functions delivered by them can be more cost-effectively administered directly by line ministries, they will be.

Crown entities will systematically be reviewed to maximize public effectiveness and to lower administrative and overhead costs to benefit ratepayers and taxpayers alike.”

Residential Care

“Government will legislate a new Residents Bill of Rights to set out clear commitments to care and to the rights of residents living in residential care facilities.”